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TO THE BOYS BACK HOME

THE STORY OF AN AMERICAN DOUGH-
BOY IN THE AMERICAN EXPE-
DITIONARY FORCES



BY
PRIVATE HENRY P. KARCH
OF THE
UNITED STATES ARMY

TO THE BOYS BACK HOME

THE STORY OF AN AMERICAN
DOUGHBOY IN FRANCE

THE STORY OF A PRIVATE SOLDIER IN
THE UNITED STATES ARMY, TOLD IN
VERSE AND RECOUNTING MANY AND
VARIED EXPERIENCES IN AMERICAN MILI-
TARY CAMPS, ON THE SEA, AND IN
FRANCE, BEFORE AND AFTER THE SIGN-
ING OF THE ARMISTICE.

✓ TO THE BOYS BACK HOME

WRITTEN AND DEDICATED TO THE BOYS
BACK HOME, FEBRUARY 22, 1919.

By

PRIVATE HENRY P. KARCH, CENTRAL
RECORDS OFFICE, ADJUTANT GEN-
ERAL'S DEPARTMENT, COMPANY
"E," C. R. O. Bn.,
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CONTENTS.

	Page
I From the Stage to the Barracks.....	7
II Sent to Camp Beauregard.....	9
III Departs for Port of Embarkation.....	12
IV On the Atlantic.....	15
V Looking for U-Boats.....	16
VI A Storm at Sea.....	19
VII Entering a Port of France.....	22
VIII A Journey to "Somewhere in France"....	26
IX Where Knights of France Were Bold...	29
X The Infantry Doughboy.....	32
XI Billeted With Two Old "Frogs".....	34
XII The Armistice	37
XIII The President Arrives.....	40
XIX To the Central Records Office.....	44
XX Uncle Sam's Wonderful Help.....	46



PRIVATE HENRY P. KARCH
UNITED STATES ARMY

TO THE BOYS BACK HOME

I.

From the Stage to the Barracks.

Let me tell you, dear friends of mine,
What I am doing far o'er the sea.
I'll start at the very beginning
And relate what occurs to me.

I was in the city of Detroit,
In the American Hawaiian Quartette,
We were stepping along in vodvil
Where the footlights we had met.

Left there for dear old Cincinnati
To bid the home folks good-bye;
Then boarded a car for the depot,
With a smile and a tear and a sigh.

Along with me was my old-time pal
To share misfortunes or joys;
We were off to destroy the wicked Hun,
Along with the rest of the boys.

Arrived in Camp Taylor, Kentucky,
Lined up for the first roll call.
Drew mess-kits, cup, knife, fork and spoon,
For the mess line we hit the ball.

We then found our bunks in the barracks
Where we tried to get some sleep,
When somebody started a crap game,
And boy! it was certainly steep.

First call woke us up in the morning,
And we had to dress like mad;
For the sergeant was bawling, "Snap into it!"
So we had to or get in bad.

When introduced to Reveille,
"Attention!" the captain commanded;
But we were rookies and laughed "Ha, ha!"
And then were promptly remanded.

School of a soldier, squads right and left,,
Line up for chow at noon,
Had salute, mark time, attention,
We were to be soldiers soon.

Then came the terrible shots in the arm,
For triple typhoid they said
We sure were a bunch of sick recruits,
Nearly half of us down in bed.

II.

Sent to Camp Beauregard.

When we got used to the depot brigade,
To Camp Beauregard we were sent,
In the Thirty-ninth Division were we,
And under discipline bent.

Our clothes were a sight when we got there,
No Pullmans for our joy-ride.
Ate corned beef and punk and corned beef,
I liked it then but I lied.

We were all to be Infantry Doughboys,
In Regiment One-Five-Four,
With a bunch of Arkansas Crackers,
It made us terribly sore.

Our Captain sure was a diplomat,
And gave commands with a snap;
And if you tried to "war dodge,"
On your conscience he would rap.

In the camp there we dwelled in squad tents,
Room for four instead of eight;
And through the holes in the roof at night
Saw the stars when it was late.

We organized a good quartette,
And my uke was wont to play,
A second "Louie" sang bass with me,
While we chased all troubles away.

In the ups and downs of a soldier,
While in that southern camp,
It was hot as hell both day and night,
And our clothes with sweat were damp.

We learned to soldier and have no fear,
On Saturdays stood inspection,
Had to have spotless clean rifles and clothes,
Or create an awful reflection.

We learned to roll a soldier's pack,
And the art of the Manual of Arms,
Then hiked through the country a day at a time
Among the neighboring farms.

We learned the General Orders,
Guard mount were made to stand;
Pass in Review for the Adjutant,
In step with the Regiment Band.

Two hours on and four hours off,
How I hate to walk a post;
Present Arms to all officers,
"Halt! Who's there?" is of nothing to boast.

Then when the Officer of the Day
Makes the daily rounds,
The General Orders you'd better know,
Or you'll think the Army's of hounds.

Then maybe you're made a super,
And chase prisoners all day,
And hear them tell their stories
Of how they got that way.

Six weeks made us well-seasoned soldiers,
Ready for most anything;
Had learned the art of the bayonet,
For the Hun to nip in the wing.

III.

Departs for Port of Embarkation.

Then one fine morning in July
For port of embarkation departed;
In platoons in a car we were shipped,
In that manner the regiment parted.

We left about five in the evening,
Bound for New Orleans,
With corned beef and canned tomatoes,
And punk and jam and beans.

New Orleans to Meridian,
Meridian to Birmingham,
Birmingham to Atlanta,
On our way for Uncle Sam.

Once a day we would fall out and hike
Through the streets of a town where we'd stop,
Where we were regular soldiers,
Going over the top.

Match quarters, poker, cards and dice,
Money changed hands a lot;
Pikers' games and table stakes,
For the cards and dice were hot.

Along the road of our travel
American Red Cross girls
Gave us hand-outs and everything
From eats to smiles and curls.

At Raleigh, North Carolina,
Had watermelon ga'ore,
At a bathhouse took a needed bath
And a rub-down till we were sore.

From Raleigh to Richmond, Virginia,
Richmond to Newport News,
Thus ended our trip of four days and nights—
At Camp Stuart filed in by twos.

The camp was right on the seashore,
And guarded by U. S. boats,
While the barracks that we occupied
Were guarded by Khaki-Coats.

While there we drew our overseas clothes,
And stood formation all day,
Then drew some bacon and hard tack,
Reserve rations on our way.

We were up at four in the morning,
Bugles were raising hell;
Officers bawling out non-coms,
K. P.'s fell in pell-mell.

We had our packs rolled the night before,
They weighed about ninety pounds,
Together with ammunition,
Of which we had thirty rounds.

Alas! we had discarded russet shoes,
Had brogan-hobnails instead;
After a hike of three miles or more
Were ready to go to bed.

Then when the sun came peeping up
We started on our hike
To the dock where waited our transport—
We wondered what it was like.

Before boarding the "Zeelandia,"
The Red Cross gave us a treat
Of coffee and doughnuts that morning,
To the tramp of many feet.

The transport held two thousand,
And our bunks were three tiers high;
We unlocked our packs three floors down
And came up to say good-bye.

The docks were lined up with people,
Who came to bid farewell
To the fighting Yankees departing
For France, that nearly fell.

IV.

On the Atlantic.

Then out to sea sailed our convoy
Of a cruiser and six transports,
'Mid cheers of twelve thousand Yankees
Leaving an American port.

It took about three or more hours,
And from land we were out of sight;
We took a last look at the old U. S. A.
While eastward continued our flight.

That last look I'll always remember,
As it meant a lot to me;
Perhaps I would never see it again,
For I may have met Eternity.

Such thoughts we cast away with a laugh,
For Dick and I were lucky;
We had been through hell and adventures before,
And bragged of being plucky.

On board the transport, out at sea,
We were given two meals a day,
The mess line an endless procession,
And in it we'd have to stay.

There was a canteen amidships,
Where the boys could *buy* their sweets,
But we were broke and had to wait
Till some one passed round the treats.

We had the Regiment Band on board,
And the music filled us with cheer;
It got the U-boats off our minds,
We expected to see far and near.

V.

Looking for U-Boats.

Then I was put on a look-out post,
On the aft end of the ship,
Where I had to look out for submarines
All throughout the trip.

With me were two big cannon,
One on each side of the deck;
The gunmen who handled them while on watch,
On the horizon could hit a speck.

I was two hours on and ten hours off,
In the morning and then at eve;
I reported everything that floated by
From fish to old seaweed.

On our right was a British transport,
On our left were three Yankee ships,
Ahead was the U. S. cruiser
That would never give us the slips.

Thus mornings dawned and the sun did set,
For we never stopped at all,
While our ships were passing signals
With flags and the siren's call.

When out three days from the U. S. A.
I got seasick as a dog,
But it didn't stop my appetite,
For I gobbled up slum like a hog.

I could eat two great big meals a day
And feed the fishes as many,
Then sit down and read a book,
Apparently as well as any.

This life gifted me an appetite,
But I had a good one before;
Slum, corned beef and army beans,
In the Army forevermore.

I ate some meals with the sailors,
At a table and out of a plate;
The grub the jackies were handed
We had considered first rate.

That privilege to me was given,
For I was a lookout post,
Performing my duties every day
Since we had left the coast.

One day I was up in the Crow's Nest,
Had a bird's-eye view of the sea,
Where the fish were playing hide-and-go-seek,
And the height was dizzy to me.

Every day at six in the morning
A submarine drill had we;
All rushed to the life rafts assigned us,
With life belts as snug as could be.

Then the C. O.'s would have their roll call,
Each man to his place on deck,
Ready to unlash the life rafts
If a submarine showed its neck.

Some of the boys were homesick,
Some had the weary blues,
Some were cramped up with seasickness,
All sitting around in twos.

My buddy and I were the saddest
When sadness we had to feel,
But when we felt good and happy
No one was to equal our zeal.

We had shared hardships and troubles,
The same as the rest of the boys;
A soldier is taught to endure it all,
Whether sadness, hardships or joys.

VI.

A Storm at Sea.

One night a storm arose at sea,
And we slept in the sailor's mess hall,
While the rain came down in torrents
In answer to Nature's call.

While the pots and pans were ballin' the jack
In the mess hall of the ship,
We were tumbled around like peas in a pod,
Holding tight, lest we slip.

The next day dawned bright and clear,
And the ocean had subsided,
When all the Sammies aboard the ship
By the Jackies were kidded and chided.

A sailor's life on the deep blue sea,
In the navy of Uncle Sam,
Is made up of many adventures—
That's why sailors don't give a damn.

Three days from France's sunny shores
We sighted a lookout balloon,
A Jackie had sighted it for-rd,
We were to reach it soon.

From a Sub-Chaser it was suspended
To sight us on our way;
We steamed up and b'lew a siren
Of welcome to them that day.

From seven different directions
Appeared seven more of the craft,
The American Submarine Chasers
Were starboard, port, for'd and aft.

And then our friend the Cruiser
Made a wide detour and departed,
Back to America once more bound,
Making us somewhat disheartened.

Our eight little friends, the Chasers,
Around our convoy played tag,
Looking out for the dreaded Hun U-boats,
Whom depth bombs were sure to gag.

Two more days of sailing,
Never a stop or hitch,
Thus one of many convoys
Starts and crosses the big ditch.

We were still in the zone of the submarines,
And still kept a careful watch,
Or a Hun may have caught us napping
And left on the sea a blotch.

That afternoon to the southward
Saw the famous Vaterland go by,
Now the American Leviathan,
With Old Glory floating on high.

Next day at noon, to the eastward
A lighthouse was sighted at last,
And then its base, then Mother Earth,
Our hearts beat quick and fast.

One more and then another
Lighthouse sprang in view,
And the land which they were built on
Looked spick and span and new.

Then in the air we heard a drone,
And, looking up, we saw
French airplanes come to meet us,
To defy old man Gravity's law.

With Submarine Chasers around us
And airplanes overhead,
A German U-Boat had a fat chance
To cop a prize of dead.

VII.

Entering a Port of France.

I'll never forget that day,
 Steaming into a port of France,
Out of the mouth of hell on the sea,
 Where we'd taken an awful chance.

With the band playing martial music,
 And the Yanks all cheering like mad,
We had ended our trip from the U. S. A.
 In twelve days—that wasn't bad.

That night we slept aboard the ship,
 In the morning to debark,
In a foreign land far over the sea,
 Where war had made it dark.

Next morning the bugle awoke us
 For the first time in twelve days;
We rolled our packs in an inch of room,
 'Mid excitement of joy and craze.

A ferry came out to the side of our boat,
 In single file we crowded on;
It landed us over on the dock
 That morn just after dawn.

And then the first battalion
Of the Regiment One-Five-Four
Paraded through the streets of Brest,
For peace forevermore.

Five miles to a rest camp we started,
Up through the first street near;
Heard three little French tots singing
"Hail, hail, the gang's all here."

Out through the country they hiked us,
Up and down hills and dales,
And the war baby we carried on our backs
Would ruin any scales.

"Bon jour, comment allez vous!"
"Donnez-moi cinq centimes!"
"Pas compris, monsieur soldat?"
"Allez-vous d'ici, toute de suite."

"What the hell does the kid want?"
Some Arkansas traveler requested.
"She wants a cent," said a student of French,
And in English "She has you bested."

Then we fell out for a longed-for rest,
Hiking three miles or more,
With our packs weighing down our tired-out feet,
Which were hot and itching and sore.

Then when the band played the "Beal Street Blues,"
It started the soldiers to shimmie,
For once again on dry land were we,
Every Tom, Dick, Harry and Jimmie.

We finally found the rest camp,
A field near a great big wall,
A barracks historic Napoleon had built
Before Napoleon's fall.

There in the field we pitched pup-tents,
And our packs we tore apart,
Laid ourselves down for a weary rest,
Were awakened in sudden start.

The top-sergeant wanted a detail
To go on guard that day,
And I was elected to walk a post
With a fixed bayonet to stay.

We hadn't hardly got started
When the rain began to fall,
So we had to put on our slickers
And rush at the bugle call.

The middle of the road was the guard house
For the guard that surrounded the camp,
And when we were off stood shivering there
On our feet that were sore and damp.

Our rifles and bayonets got rusty,
We cleaned them without any oil,
Stood rifle inspection next morning
After a night of lonesome toil.

We had to go two miles for water,
And pass fifty guards on the way;
We lined up for corn-willie thrice a day,
And in camp were made to stay.

All that day we drilled in the rain,
Got everything rusty once more,
So we could work in the morning
In our pup-tents, two-by-four.

VIII.

A Journey to "Somewhere in France."

Then we were told to roll our packs,
For we left in the morning at six,
And wouldn't have time to roll them then.
Weren't we in a swell fix?

Next morning, after a cold, chilly night,
With the rain still coming down,
We started the hike to the depot,
The same hike we'd taken from town.

We never stopped once on the roadside,
As the rain hadn't stopped at all,
And the rain soaked into our hardtack,
Its use ruined to knock down a wall.

We got to the depot down in Brest,
Stood in the streets of gravel,
And the Ives Miniature Railway there
Was to be our mode of travel.

Each car had apartments that held about eight,
Where each man had room to sit;
We found five days' rations under the seat.
With no room left to put a mess kit.

Our packs we slung around the walls,
And sat ourselves down to rest;
The train creaked and groaned and started
On our trip from the town of Brest.

We ran about ten miles an hour,
For where we did not know,
On our way to "Somewhere in France,"
With the morning's sun ag'ow.

It had at last stopped raining,
When under shelter we'd got at last;
Out through the country and through little towns,
Our thoughts coming quick and fast.

The houses of France are all of stone,
Of stone with mortar between,
With red-tiled roofs that shine in the sun,
Surrounded by vineyards green.

We passed rolling hills and level plains,
Through towns both large and small,
And in every town we'd see a Yank
Whose attention we would call.

When we'd stop awhile at a station,
With Uncle Sam's Yanks would converse,
And ask them all about the war
To save the Universe.

We heard some wild and woolly tales
Of the heroism of our boys,
Who met the Hun at the front, face to face,
And found out that we weren't toys.

Then when it came time for us to sleep,
In our little compartment,
We did the best we could in the room we had,
Like fish in a sardine department.

Along the road the Red Cross Girls—
God bless them, one and all—
Who were ever, ever on the job,
Winter, summer and fall.

Our journey ended for us at last,
After four days on the road;
The place we stopped was Mehun-sur-Yèvre,
And we packed on our backs our load.

IX.

Where Knights of France Were Bold.

We hiked up the main street, Jeanne d'Arc,
For Joan of Arc of old,
And under the ancient archway,
Where knights of France were bold.

To the right on the top of a hill
Was Charles VII. Chateau,
Where he had made a prison
For Joan of Arc to go.

There in its ancient ruins,
With the tower still intact,
Where the key to the cell of Joan of Arc
Hung on the wall near a crack.

We turned to the left on Rue 14 Juillet,
The Fourth of July of France,
When they spied us the little French children
Came out and started to dance.

We stopped in front of Cafe Lion d'Or,
Meaning Golden Lion Cafe,
Where we were to be billeted
And partake of wine and frappe.

Three squads were selected, Dick and I in one;
We were ushered around to the rear,
Up a ladder into a hay loft,
Where the rats we were to fear.

We made our bunks on a pile of hay.
And came down to wash and shave.
When we met a pretty mademoiselle
Whom we promised that we'd behave.

She was the bar-girl in the cafe,
And sold the Yankees drinks,
One look at the inside of the place
Reminded me of Hinky Dink's.

It was run by a man the Yank. called Jack,
His real name I never knew;
He weighed three hundred and fifty,
And dressed like Little Boy Blue.

He was jolly and fat and had a wheeze,
Had been to the United States,
Told us of little old New York
When cheap were the sailing rates.

We bought a drink and then he set 'em up
When in walked a rough M. P.;
Told us that during that time of day
In cafes we had no right to be.

He wore a belt and a great big gat,
And a brassard on his arm,
And a Stetson hat and russet shoes—
Said he didn't hail from a farm.

Next morning were up for Reveille,
And drilled until Retreat;
Took in the town that very same night—
Our liberty was a treat.

And here the First Battalion
Of the Regiment One-Five-Four
Had ended a trip from the U. S. A.
In twenty-six days or more.

X.

The Infantry Doughboy.

The Infantry is the Doughboy,
The soldier that does the work;
In a Doughboy you'll find the real soldier,
A soldier that doesn't shirk.

Into Doughboys the Army did train us,
Were ready in France for the fray;
The next day the Captain lined us up
For the front to go that day.

Alas! not such luck for my pal and me,
For we never had shot a gun;
We had missed it somehow or other,
And were going to miss the fun.

A replacement outfit they made us,
Training men for the front;
Fifth Depot Division was the 39th,
Whether we liked it or not.

The gas mask drill was hard to bear,
For we slobbered all over our chins,
And ran double time around the park,
Bumping and knocking our shins.

In the course of three weeks the Major
Detached us to the Q. M. C. ;
There at A. P. O. Seven-Four-One
Office men were to be.

We worked in the clothing department,
And traded for some new duds ;
We sure were a couple of slickers
Eating beef steak and spuds.

We went to the town photographer
And had our pictures taken,
To send them to the folks at home,
Whom we had not forsaken.

We met a lad named Adler,
A baritone was he ;
So we organized a trio,
As good as any you see.

We got up a very good program,
That I don't think could be beat ;
We sang for the officers and the men
And took them off their feet.

The Colonel indorsed a transfer for us
To the circuit of the A. E. F.,
But the Major General turned us down—
Perhaps thought we sang the wrong cief.

Then on the fifth of November
The Division was broken up,
And we were sent to St. Aignan
In another outfit to sup.

We hiked from St. Aignan to Couddes,
Not the kind you have in your clothes,
For this was another small French town,
Wherein French heroes repose.

XI.

Billeted With Two Old "Frogs".

On the outskirts of the town we were billeted,
In a house with two old "Frogs,"
Who had one bed and lived in one room,
With a fireplace full of logs.

The youngest "Frog" was forty years old,
And his papa was eighty-two;
They made a living chopping wood,
For a few francs a day would do.

In the town was a Y. M. C. A.,
Where the boys all hung around,
Writing and reading and playing games
Till bedtime on the ground.

There was a piano in the Hut,
And it wasn't very long
Till all the boys would start to sing
In voices loud and strong.

Then one dark and dreary night,
When you couldn't even see,
A motor truck coming down the street,
Bumped my Buddy's knee.

It hurt him so bad he couldn't walk,
So we carried him to a cafe,
And summoned a doctor as soon as we could,
For he had to come a way.

He was sent to a hospital in Contres,
Back to Couddes in two weeks was he,
On a cane he was hopping and smiling,
Back again was glad to be.

But Destiny still deceived us,
And ten days after that
An ambulance came and got him,
And was off down the road like a bat.

He went to a hospital in St. Aignan,
And we were transferred away,
Down to the town of Contres
We hiked with our packs next day.

Contres was about the size of Mehun,
Had a regular Y. M. C. A.,
And just about ten thousand soldiers
Paraded the streets each day.

So here was where the Regiment,
Infantry, One-Six-Two,
In the First Depot Division,
Was where friends I met a few.

I longed to see my comrade,
Sixteen kilometers away,
And if his leg was better,
The one he hurt that day.

We were together in everything,
In adventures, woes or joys;
But when he left, my solitude
Was noticed by the boys.

No one could ever fill his place,
The place down deep in my heart,
For he was my buddy and I was his pal,
And no one could tear us apart.

XII.

The Armistice.

Then on November Eleventh—
You'll never forget that day,
When the wonderful news of the armistice
From Paris came all the way.

Let me tell you, friends of mine,
You may have been overjoyed,
But let me tell you of the stunts
Some of our boys employed.

The tears rolled down the Colonel's face,
The Majors were all solemn;
The Captains and Lieutenants
At attention stood in column.

The Bugle sounded the Colors,
And then, like in a story,
Down through the row of company fronts
The Sergeants brought Old Glory.

Every one at attention,
The officers at salute,
The band played "The Star-Spangled Banner"
With trumpet, drum and flute.

Boys! thrills and chills and everything
Went up and down our spines;
What a feeling I never had had before
When our Flag went down the lines.

And when the Colonel gave "At Rest,"
And it passed down the line,
A perfect bedlam then broke loose
From that feeling in our spine.

The boys shot off their rifles,
The officers their gats,
The Colonel waived his cap o'erhead,
Helter-skelter ran the cats.

In the midst of all the shooting,
In that boisterous affray,
The Mayor of the town came out and gave
The Colonel a big bouquet.

That night the Yanks all reveled
At the joyous news that day
That brought the World a Victory
Forever and for aye.

But we were in the Army,
The greatest one on earth;
For the U. S. stands for Freedom
And Liberty from her birth.

Still we had to keep up drill,
And learn to soldier well;
Soldiering that brought us Victory
From a world that was in Hell.

From then on we were all anxious
For when we'd start for home,
Back to our loved ones across the sea,
Our folks we had left alone.

And as the weary days passed by,
From Reveille to Taps,
The Peace Conference at Paris
Was laying the world's new maps.

XIII.

The President Arrives.

Then ere many days passed by,
Drilling with the Regiment,
We got the news that from U. S. A.
Had arrived our President.

He had come over here to settle things,
And to mingle with the Boys,
To wish them a Merry Christmas,
Without any Santa Claus toys.

He visited England and Italy,
And Belgium, and at the front
He saw his Boys in the Army
Resting after the hunt.

Today he is the greatest man
In the eyes of the world we're in;
By his hand he changed the Universe
From a World of strife and sin.

Turn politics down at the present day,
Don't dare knock our President's plan!
He is over here for our Nation,
For each woman and child and man.

Such are the thoughts I think

When I hike back and forth each day
To the drill ground, five kilometers
Out to the north a way.

Fall in! Attention! Right dress! Front!

Count off! Squads right! March!
Platoon column left! Squads right! March!
"Get in step there, Karch!"

Saturday we stood inspection,

Where the officers were to tell
A button off or dirty shoes—
That Yank was S. O. L.

Another month had passed in France.

"Wou'd we ever go home?"
"When is this and that to happen?"
"Why do they leave us alone?"

"Be patient, boy, your time will come.

You're lined up for your turn.
There are two million of us,
Waiting with hearts that yearn."

Uncle Sam has a big question

Of how to do this thing;
Some must remain to keep order,
While others to home he'll bring.

The boys that I'd give the first choice to
Are the wounded, maimed and sick;
The ones that had seen real action,
The boys who turned the trick.

In the meantime, keep up the spirit,
Keep in good health and mind;
Think of the Boys who gave up their lives,
Think of the Boys who are blind.

What did you do to help win the War?
What part did you partake?
What right have you to want to go home,
You who are wide awake?

I have a brother who comes before me—
He is younger than I at that—
In the Argonne Woods he faced the Hun
Who gave him tit for tat.

He captured a Boche one evening
While he was scouting around;
When the Boche saw him, cried "Kamerad!"
Or he would have bitten the ground.

He was gassed without a gas mask
In a barrage from the enemy's guns;
Went over the top in machine gun fire
Shot by the Kaiser's sons.

He was plucky and lucky and came out safe,
His helmet all dented in;
For days without food and water
In the German lines had been.

The Doughboy Regiment, One-Four-Eight,
Company K, Division Three-Seven;
Jumped from twelfth to second Corporal,
For ten corporals had gone to heaven.

He was sent to an Army Candidate School
Down in de La Valbonne,
But the Armistice stopped commissions,
And he's back in his regiment home.

XIV.

To The Central Record Office.

Then came the day before Christmas.

My name called, I stepped out;
To the Central Records Office I came
Over the "Frog" railroad route.

They loaded us up in box cars:
40 Hommes—8 Chevaux,
Meaning forty men and eight horses,
Bound for the C. R. O.

So here in Bourges is where I am
Writing this verse and song;
In the Central Records Office,
On an Underwood I am strong.

I handle correspondence here
All day long each week,
From Generals down to buck privates—
Through me they have to speak.

Here in a French Artillery Camp,
On the outskirts of the town,
In wooden Yankee barracks
Is where we smile and frown.

We handle the records of the A. E. F.,
Of each man and where he is;
When folks want information
They write to us and quiz.

If all the folks who are back in the States
Would address their letters plain,
So a fellow could understand them,
They wouldn't be writing in vain.

The people are kicking about the mail;
In the Army you have no kick;
Have patience and listen to reason
Or we'll be in the Army to stick.

How long it will be till we're all home?
Is the question every one asks;
When the Peace is signed and the World's at rest,
Uncle Sam has finished his tasks.

XV.

Uncle Sam's Wonderful Help.

Old Uncle Sam has had wonderful help
To finish this War so soon;
Liberty Loans and soldiers,
Aircraft that were a boon.

The Salvation Army and Y. M. C. A.,
American Red Cross, too;
The Knights of Columbus, all over here
Helping Our Boys get through.

The Q. M. C. and Ordnance,
The Medical Corps, besides;
The Marines, Doughboys and Aeronauts,
Over all General Pershing presides.

The folks back home with their Thrift Stamps,
The men in munitions plants,
The subscribers for Liberty Loan Bonds,
All made the Kaiser dance.

And the Jackies who brought us over,
Who kept the U-Boats away,
And demolished the submarines one by one,
We shouldn't forget that day

Think of our noble President,
The man who has done so much
For the whole wide world and the U. S. A.—
Surely, no other did such.

Then think of our beautiful women,
Who in patience in God did trust;
Who have sacrificed brothers and husbands
In the fight with the Hun for Lust.

Then hear me last of all, dear friends,
Let us stop and think of mothers;
For Liberty, Truth and Freedom
They have given their sons for others.

Let us thank God that the War is done,
And the world is again at peace;
And pray that our dear old Yankeeland
Will never, never cease.

The greatest day of all will be
When we Yanks are homeward bound,
And sight the Statue of Liberty
In New York Harbor Sound.

Once more on a regular railroad coach,
And handling regular money,
And pie and cake and ice cream,
And milk and bread and honey.

I can't begin to think of when
I'll meet my dearest mother,
And then my dad and then my sis,
Oh boy! and then my brother.

In closing, friends, I wish to say
I have done my very best;
For in these lines don't mean to be
A knock or jeer or jest.

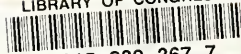
I hope to see you all home soon,
And meet the merry crowd,
And jump into civilian clothes
That are awfully, awfully loud.

So au revoir, good-bye, good luck;
Hurrah for Uncle Sam!
Hurrah for the Jackies and Sammies,
For they don't give a d—n.

THE END.



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